

Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUEBEC 00245 041700Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 /058 W
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P 041510Z JUL 77
FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1030
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL MONTREAL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUEBEC 0245

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJ: ARE BRAINS IMPORTANT IN QUEBEC POLITICS?

1. LIBERAL DEPUTY ANDRE RAYNAUD, OFTEN MENTIONED HIMSELF AS A POSSIBLE LIBERAL LEADER, YESTERDAY COMMENTED TO ME PRIVATELY THAT HE THOUGHT JEAN CHRETIEN'S RECENT "ANNOUNCEMENT" OF HIS AVAILABILITY FOR QUEBEC'S LIBERAL LEADERSHIP WAS "PREMATURE". RAYNAUD FURTHER COMMENTED THAT HE IS NOT CONVINCED CHRETIEN HAS "INTELLECTUAL QUALITIES" NEEDED TO COMBAT RENE LEVESQUE EFFECTIVELY. CHRETIEN, HE SAID, MAY BE "TOO POPULIST" TO APPEAL TO THE MAJORITY OF YOUNG, WELL EDUCATED URBAN VOTERS WHO SUPPORTED THE PQ OVERWHELMINGLY IN PAST ELECTION. WHEN REMINDED THAT A STUDY PUBLISHED LAST YEAR BY MCGILL UNIVERSITY SOCIOLOGISTS PINNARD AND HAMILTON INDICATED THAT THE MAJORITY OF THIS GROUP IS FIRMLY COMMITTED TO THE PQ IN ANY CASE, THEREFORE THE DECISIVE ELEMENT IN A REFERENDUM OR IN THE NEXT ELECTION IS MORE LIKELY TO BE THE 40-50 PERCENT OF UNCOMMITTED VOTERS, OVER HALF OF WHOM HOLD RELATIVELY CONSERVATIVE -- ALBEIT NATIONALIST -- VIEWS, LIVE OUTSIDE MONTREAL, AND HAVE FEW INTELLECTUAL PRETENSION, RAYNAUD LOOKED STARTLED.

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2. RECOVERING QUICKLY, HE TOLD ME THAT HE DOES NOT CONSIDER CHRETIEN COMING FROM OTTAWA AS A FATAL HANDICAP. HE POINTED OUT THAT CHRETIEN WOULD HAVE TWO TO FOUR YEARS TO ESTABLISH HIMSELF IN QUEBEC BEFORE REFERENDUM OR NEXT ELECTION IS HELD. PROVIDED HE MADE A CONVINCING EFFORT TO DEMONSTRATE HIS INDEPENDENCE OF OTTAWA, RAYNAUD THOUGHT CHRETIEN COULD

OVERCOME THE UNQUESTIONED INITIAL HANDICAP HIS RECENT ASSOCIATIONS
IMPOSE. SINCE RAYNAUD IS ALSO A RECENT IMPORT FROM OTTAWA,
PRESUMABLY HIS REASONING WOULD APPLY EQUALLY TO HIMSELF.
HOWEVER, ONE DOUBTS EXCESSIVE MODESTY WOULD LEAD HIM TO IDENTIFY
HIMSELF
AS LACKING IN ADEQUATE INTELLECTUAL ATTRIBUTES.
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Message Attributes

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